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ABSTRACT

Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) and Private Industry Councils (PICs) were surveyed concerning their implementation of Exemplary Youth Employment Programs described in Section 205 of the Job Training Partnership Act. Surveys were mailed to over 500 agencies. Of the 219 responding agencies, 77 percent were operating at least one Exemplary Youth Employment Program and 37 percent of those not running such programs planned to do so. Of the respondents: 70 percent operated Pre-employment Skills Training (PST) programs; 27 percent operated Education for Employment (EE) programs; 26 percent operated School-to-Work Transition (SWT) programs; and 83 percent operated Entry Employment Experience (EEE) programs. High percentages felt their programs strongly resembled youth programs run under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act--42 percent of PST, 53 percent of EE, 38 percent of SWT, and 44 percent of EEE. The numbers of clients served had increased for all programs. PIC-approved youth employment competencies were used among 81 percent of responding PST programs, 70 percent of EE, 61 percent of SWT, and 65 percent of EEE. Recommendations were for (1) policymakers to focus on skill development, not just placement; (2) legislation to provide support (technical assistance and training) for mandated program designs; and (3) examination of incentives to encourage model use. (YLB)

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EXEMPLARY YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

SURVEY REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) of 1982 marked a new period in national job training efforts. However, as is usually the case, the new effort built upon many aspects of previous federal policy under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). Two examples are the decentralized planning at the community level which was a hallmark feature of CETA and the role of business in planning and oversight through private industry councils (PICs) introduced in the CETA Amendments of 1978.

While federal legislation often has provided extensive detail concerning administrative, planning and decision making structures, it has more often than not been silent as regards specific program design features. Effective program designs, whether developed at the federal, state or local level, usually have been disseminated through technical assistance, information sharing and networking on a voluntary basis, rather than through legislative or regulatory mandate. However, during the formulation of JTPA in 1981-82, several of the framers of the new act became convinced that a great deal had been learned about how to design effective youth employment, education, and job training programs during the CETA period. Specifically, they were impressed by the wealth of knowledge developed as part of the demonstration projects and research funded through the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act (YEDPA) of 1977-1982. Seeking to build upon that knowledge base and to ensure that previous investments might inform future design decisions, the framers of JTPA took the unusual step of authorizing specific youth program models from the YEDPA experience as Section 205 of the JTPA.

While implementation of Section 205 models is voluntary at the local level, those who worked to pass this section of the Act are vitally interested in the actual utilization of these models by Service Delivery Areas (SDAs). This interest is heightened by the concern of some that the goals of youth-targeted programs under JTPA may lack clear statement and even concensus. In any event, one can accurately state that youth participation in JTPA has been an area of close scrutiny and some controversy since the inception of the Act. At the national level, the focus of policymakers has been on broad performance "numbers"; i.e. is the state/local system spending 40 percent of II-A funds on youth as required by the statute; are dropouts, functional illiterates, and the handicapped receiving equitable services; and is the service mix for in-school (secondary) students appropriate. At the state and local levels, PICs, elected officials and professionals grapple with the issues from a different perspective: what are the appropriate roles for JTPA and the locally supported education system in meeting the needs of low-income and other at-risk youth; should JTPA emphasize

competency attainment or employment for youth; how does one balance the performance driven, hence job placement oriented, nature of JTPA with the immense need for basic remediation among the most unemployable youth; and given the shortage of jobs (demand) and high adult unemployment in many communities, how does one balance the needs of youth with the needs of adults in the context of serving the employer community.

There are no easy answers or in fact any one right answer to these questions. However, NAPIC believes that public dialogue on the subject might be enhance through better information on the state of youth services since the implementation of JTPA. A glaring gap in the current information base is data on the extent and nature of programs established pursuant to Section 205 of JTPA. To obtain information on this aspect of JTPA, NAPIC, with advice and assistance from several other national groups, decided to survey the Service Delivery Areas concerning their utilization of these model (exemplary) programs and their plans for future implementation of such programs.

The survey was a short one in hopes of encouraging a wide response. We believe that the value of the information collected is important. Our expectations for the survey were as follows: (1) to provide policymakers with quantifiable data on which model programs are being used within SDAs, how many youth are served in such programs, and how much is being spent on the effort; (2) to begin the process of developing a data base on localities which are running such programs that might be used as a resource for technical assistance and possibly further assessment of the various models; and (3) to begin to learn whether there are policies that could be adopted at the national or state level to both improve the legislative models and promote their wider utilization.

We wish to thank all those professional staff who took time out of their busy schedules to respond to this survey. We look forward to continuing cooperation in this effort. Our experience shows that PICs, elected officials and JTPA professionals care a great deal about providing effective assistance to the nation's unemployed, disadvantaged youth. They must contend on a day-to-day basis with how best to use very limited dollars in a fashion that will produce a lasting benefit in the working lives of some of these young people. We trust that this survey will provide a degree of assistance in this important task.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY QUESTIONS

One of the purposes of the instrument was to determine how many organizations were operating any of the Exemplary Youth Employment Programs as defined by Section 205 of the Job Training

Partnership Act. We also wanted to determine what kind of exemplary programs were being operated, when these programs started; how many young people were being served; the size of program budgets, and whether any PIC approved competency systems were being used within the exemplary programs.

Respondents were asked if they were operating any of the Exemplary Youth Employment Programs as defined by Section 205 of JTPA. Those who stated that they are now operating one or more of the Exemplary Youth Employment Programs were asked which Exemplary Youth Employment Program(s) they were operating. They were also asked whether these programs had any resemblance to similar projects operated in the area under CETA and the year their Exemplary Youth Employment Program(s) started operations. Respondents also were asked what their program budgets and client case-loads were for program years 1983(transition year), 1984, and 1985. Finally, information was requested as to whether any PIC recognized competency system was being used within their Exemplary Youth Employment Program(s) and, if so, which competency system.

Those agencies who were operating an Entry Employment Experience Exemplary Youth Employment Program also were asked if they were operating a try-out employment component within their Entry Employment Experience program. Those who responded in the affirmative were asked what percentage of clients were placed at private-for- profit work sites, private non-profit work sites, and public non-profit work sites.

Since Section 205 of JTPA allows for "Compensation in Lieu of Wages" for participants in try-out employment programs, the survey asked if "Compensation in Lieu of Wages" was provided for such participants. Those who were providing compensation where then asked what rate of compensation was being provided and how they were dealing with issues such as:

- o responsibility for payments;
- o FICA (Social Security) withholding;
- o Federal Taxes, and
- o Worker's compensation.

On the other hand, if respondents stated they were not operating any of the exemplary programs, they were asked if they intended to do so. If they responded that they were planning to operate such a program, they were asked which Exemplary Youth Employment Programs they were planning to operate. Those who responded that they were not planning on operating any of the Exemplary Youth Employment Programs were asked to list in order the three main

reasons for not doing so.

Those respondents who stated that they were not now operating any of the Exemplary Youth Employment Programs also were asked if they were operating any programs that resembled an Exemplary Youth Employment Program but with either the 8 percent education set-aside or the 6 percent incentive for hard-to-serve youth. In addition, all of these respondents were asked if they used any system of PIC approved youth competencies in any of their youth programs, and if so which competencies.

Finally, all respondents were asked to provide a name and address of a contact person within their organization who could be reached if additional information was needed.

GENERAL FINDINGS

On April 5, 1985 the National Association of Private Industry Councils mailed out the survey instrument to over 500 Private Industry Councils and Service Delivery Areas in an attempt to determine the extent to which the "Exemplary Youth Employment Programs" described in Section 205 of the JTPA had been implemented at the local level. In addition to examining the implementation of these models, we wanted to determine the nature of these programs, how many young people were being served and whether any system of PIC recognized youth employment competencies was being used within the exemplary youth program(s) being operated.

Having completed the process of tabulating and analyzing the data collected, we can report that 77 percent of the 219 agencies responding are now operating at least one of the Exemplary Youth Employment Programs, with 37 percent of those not now running such programs planning to do so in the future.

The following sections of this report identify each of the four exemplary program models and detail the responses as they apply separately to each program.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT SKILLS TRAINING

Pre-employment Skills Training programs were being run by 70 percent of those agencies responding to the survey. A high percentage (42) felt that their programs strongly resembled youth programs which had been run in the area under CETA, a slightly greater 48 percent felt their programs did not resemble anything that had been operating under CETA.

The average program started operation in July of 1984[1] with a budget of approximately $144,091. Average program budgets for all three years were:

1983 . . . . . $78,749
1984 . . . . . .$144,091
1985 . . . . . .$118,293

Client case loads for Pre-employment Skills Programs have grown steadily over the past three years from an average of 99 per program in 1983, to 144 per program in 1984, and 201 projected per program at the time of the survey for 1985.

PIC approved youth employment competencies were in place and used among 81% of those responding. Competency systems in use in this program were:

Pre-employment and Work Maturity 99%
Basic Education Skills 33%
Job Specific Skills 16%

EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Of those respondents who are operating any form of exemplary youth employment program; 27 percent are operating Education for Employment Programs. These Education for Employment Programs strongly resembled youth programs operated under CETA in 53 percent of the responses, while 42 percent of the respondents did not believe their programs resembled programs operated under CETA and 5 percent did not know.

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1. Unless otherwise indicated all references to dates and years refer to JTPA program years. 1985 figures reflect planning estimates at the time of the survey.

The average Education for Employment program started operation in July of 1983 and served approximately 70 clients in that year. The number of clients served increased dramatically during the next year, jumping to an average of 193 in 1984. At the time of this survey, programs expected to serve an average of 159 clients during 1985.

Budgets for the Education for Employment programs averaged for:

1983	$96,750
1984	$97,821
1985	$120,731

PIC approved youth employment competencies were used in 70 percent of the education for employment programs. Competency systems used in this program were:

Pre-employment and Work Maturity	82%
Basic Education Skills	82%
Job Specific Skills	33%

SCHOOL TO WORK TRANSITION

School to Work Transition programs were operated by 26 percent of the respondents of whom 38 percent thought that their programs were similar to CETA projects operated in the area previously. The average School to Work Transition program was established in June of 1984 and served 91 clients in that year. Average case loads for programs saw a sizable increase over the past three years. Starting at an average of 10 participants for those programs operating in 1983; rising to 91 in 1984, and 141 projected for 1985.

Budgets for School to Work Transition programs averaged at:

1983	$72,856
1984	$115,646
1985	$105,407

PIC approved competencies were in place in 61 percent of the School to Work Transition programs. These programs used the following competency systems:

Pre-employment and Work Maturity	100%
Basic Educational Skills	33%
Job Specific Skills	33%

ENTRY EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

An overwhelming 83 percent of those operating any of the Exemplary Youth Employment programs are operating an Entry Employment Experience program. Within this group 90 percent are also are operating a try-out employment component.

Of the affirmative respondents, 44 percent felt their programs resembled previous efforts under CETA and 49 percent felt that their programs did not resemble anything that had been in place under CETA.

The average Entry Employment Experience program started operation in July of 1983 with a budget of $98,885 and a case load of 64 clients. Budgets for these programs have increased modestly to $129,789 for 1984, and $151,164 planned for 1985. The numbers of clients served has increased to an average of 261 for 1984, and a planned 295 at the time of the survey for 1985. Sixty-five (65) percent of the respondents stated that they had PIC approved competency systems in place and were using the following systems:

Pre-employment and Work Maturity	100%
Basic Education Skills	32%
Job Specific Skills	32%

Of those agencies operating Entry Employment Experience programs, 90 percent are operating a try-out employment element within their program. During program year 1985 the average program plans to place 53 clients at private-for-profit work sites; 13 clients at public non-profit work sites; and fewer than 4 clients at private, non-profit work sites.

Of those programs operating a try-out employment component, 94 percent were providing "compensation in lieu of wages" for their clients. The rate of compensation varied from $1.95 to $3.51 per hour, with an average of $3.19 per hour. "Compensation in lieu of wages" was paid by the PIC in 26 percent, employer in 7 percent, sub-contractor in 48 percent,. and local government in 19 percent of the programs.

Thirty-six (36) percent of these programs withheld FICA (Social Security) contributions from participant payments. However, 86 percent provided worker's compensation insurance for their participants; with costs assumed by the PIC in 27 percent, employer in 17 percent, sub-contractor in 40 percent, and local government in 17 percent of these programs.

RESPONDENTS NOT CURRENTLY OPERATING EXEMPLARY YOUTH

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Those agencies responding who are not operating any exemplary programs at this time but plan to do so in the future; indicated that the programs they planned to operate were:

Education for Employment 44%
Pre-employment Skills Training 100%
Entry-employment Experience 100%

In addition, of those agencies who were not operating any exemplary youth employment programs, only 27 percent were operating programs resembling any of the Exemplary Youth Employment programs with either the 8 percent education set-aside or the 6 percent incentive for hard-to-serve youth.

Seventy-one (71) percent of the agencies responding that they were not now operating any of the Exemplary Youth Employment Programs, do have a system of PIC approved competencies in place for their other youth programs. Listed below is the competency area and the percentage of respondents that have a PIC approved system in that area:

COMPETENCY SYSTEMS:

Pre-employment and Work Maturity 98%
Basic Educational Skills 57%
Job Specific Skills 43%

REASONS FOR NOT OPERATING EXEMPLARY PROGRAMS

"What do you see as the three main reasons you are not operating Exemplary Youth Employment Programs?"

Of the thirty two (32) respondents to this question - each of which listed at least one reason - several issues were raised repeatedly. Most of the responses indicated that the legislative requirements in section 205 were too cumbersome and added an additional administrative burden that was not financially feasible. These respondents also indicated that most of the activities specified in section 205 could be carried out through other program strategies, specifically those listed in section

204 of the legislation.

Several respondents noted that it was difficult to get employers to commit to the retention of trainees. This refers to the particular requirement in try-out employment that requires an employer to retain the participant after completion of 250 training hours.

Several respondents noted that local policy decisions excluded 14 and 15 year olds from training due to limited JTPA funds. This decision would eliminate the Pre-employment Skills Training in Section 205.

Finally, respondents listed a mix of other reasons, including:

- o no technical assistance on how to operate such "complex" programs;
- o the PIC's emphasis on skills training and placement; and
- o insufficient resources, either administrative or programmatic

Note: Two respondents indicated that they had tried to operate a try-out employment program and it had failed. No further explanation was given.

SURVEY STRUCTURE AND RESULTS

Of the some 500 survey instruments which where mailed out, 219 were returned for a return rate of over 40 percent, a good rate for a survey requiring certain technical information and involving no telephone follow-up or prepaid return mailers. The results of the survey indicated that 77 percent of the respondents are operating at least one of the Exemplary Youth Employment Programs. While this is a substantial number, it should be remembered that it reflects only programs operated by those agencies which completed and returned the survey instrument. It is likely safe to assume that agencies not operating any of the Exemplary Programs are less inclined to return the survey than those who operate or plan to operate such programs. Therefore the survey results may overstate the general utilization of these models.

In examining budgetary information, (Fig. 1.) be aware that we sought actual expenditures for the Transition Year, projected actual expenditures for the first program year and planned expenditures for the second program year. However, we suspect

that a number of respondents provided contract amounts (planned) for all these periods. If this is the case, actual expenditures during the transition and first program years may be somewhat overstated. Results indicate that first year programs were more expensive to operate on a per capita basis then second year programs, (Fig.2). To a large extent this fact reflects the higher start-up costs inherent in most new programs. Another possible reason is that new programs may not have been able to recruit and serve all of the clients they had targeted for the first year, thereby increasing the per client cost.

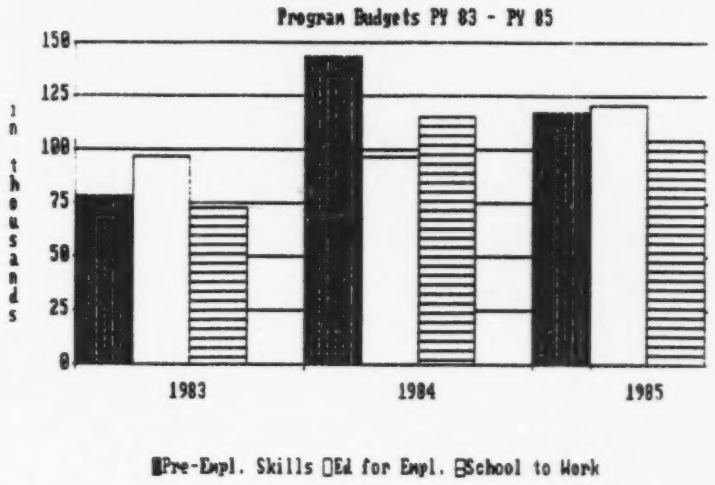

Figure 1

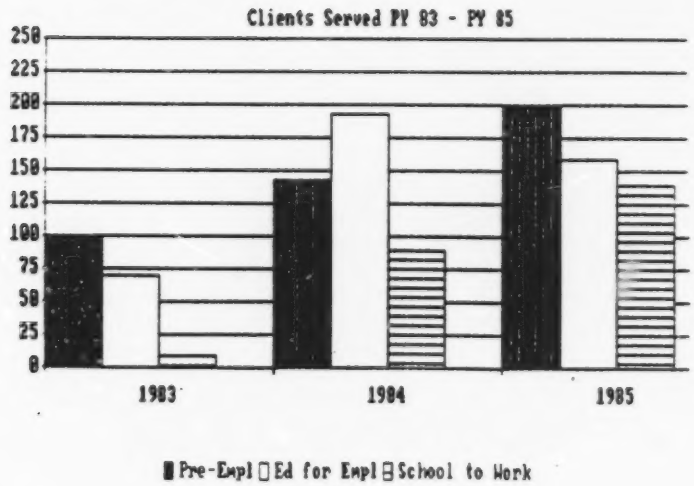

Figure 2

The survey instrument did not define the youth employment competency areas; i.e. pre-employment, work maturity, basic education, job specific skills. Therefore, the information collected on various competency systems used within each program design may reflect local variations in the definition of each competency area.

SUMMARY: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Before having the results of this survey, NAPIC along with many other organizations and policy makers assumed that very little use was being made of the exemplary program models. This assumption had been based on anecdotal reports from the field as well as indications from recent surveys (Grinker - Walker, NAB) that youth program and design was creating some difficulty for PICs and SDA's. Because data is not being collected nationally these independent surveys provided the only data base

The results of this survey show that a substantial number of PICs/SDAs are utilizing the option under section 205 to operate legislatively defined program models. Yet we know from recent surveys that many localities are not meeting the legislative requirements to spend 40% of their Title II-A funds of youth. A question raised by the results of this survey is - Can these models assist in correcting the "40% dilemma"? We believe these models can.

The idea of describing specific program strategies through legislation was a new one with the advent of JTPA. Grounded in several years of research, these models provide a partial answer to the question - "What do we know about what works." This section of the law was an effort to impart this knowledge. The law also provides an incentive for SDAs to operate such a program since all the costs may be charged to training. Given the cap on administrative and support service dollars, it was thought that this could be a great inducement to put into practice the knowledge we have developed over the years.

Has it worked? While the results of the survey are not conclusive it suggests that many administrators are taking advantage of this option. But a look at the numbers of young people being served and the program budgets would suggest that these programs constitute a small part of an SDA's overall youth strategy.

One reason for this fact may be JTPA's emphasis on job placements as a primary goal. Clearly the message at the national level over the last two years has been placement oriented. Since the expressed goal for the exemplary models (excluding try-out employment) may not be immediate placement, it is possible that

they are being viewed as secondary strategies.

Another reason might relate to the "capacity building" which must occur in any new program.The legislation imparts the knowledge we have accumulated over the years through a written design. But legislation, or any written model, is not enough to impart the knowledge of how to operate such a program. As many commentors noted on this survey, these programs are complex to understand and. No technical assistance has been provided to assist in the practical on-site development of these programs.

A third reason may lie in the incentive structure. Many commentors noted that all the program activities were allowable under Section 204 with fewer restrictions. While this is true, the beauty of the exemplary models is that they describe how separate activities can be put together in a strategic fashion. When operated independently, this strategic framework may be lost. Another cause may be the potential audit risk in operating such programs since auditors could hold operators strictly accountable for program structure. The incentive (charging all costs to training), without any staff training and examples of successful programs, appears not to be enough to incur the audit risk.

Through this survey NAPIC will be able to develop an information network of SDAs operating specific exemplary models. We will use this information in providing technical assistance to local PICs and SDAs. This is one step towards assisting the field in building the capacity to operate such programs.

Several other recommendations came out of this survey:

- Public policy makers must begin to focus the employment and training message on the development of the skills a young person needs to enter the labor force, not just on placement.

- If legislation is going to mandate certain program designs, then appropriate support, through technical assistance and training must be provided nationally.

- An examination should be undertaken to determine whether other incentives can be provided to encourage the use of these models.

As JTPA is still a relatively new system, it is encouraging to see the extent to which the Exemplary Youth Employment models are being utilized. Local program administrators, planners, and operators are taking risks and developing creative program strategies to assist young people who are making their way into the local labor market. It is our hope that the results of this

survey will serve as a starting point for conversations on how to encourage others to do the same.